

Redney's Christmas Smoke

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It was three days before Christmas. Redney Burke separated his diminutive frame from the seething crowd of humanity that pressed along the street and paused before a plate glass window which above all others attracted him. This was not a department store or a candy store or a bakeshop. Inside there were neither toys nor sleds nor good things to eat, but it held those things upon which Redney Burke had feasted his small eyes for many days. And now he looked, with his whole soul in his glance—he looked and looked and looked. He sniffed the air and imagined to himself that already he was enjoying the good things within.

For it was a cigar store, a store of the better class, full of pipes and tobacco and cigarettes and chewing tobacco and everything that ends in smoke. In the front of the window immediately under the olfactory nerves of Mr.



"WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE FOR CHRISTMAS?"

Redney Burke was a pipe—not an expensive one, but one of just the make and pattern that suited Mr. Burke. He had religiously watched this pipe from day to day, afraid that some other customer would buy it. But there it still remained.

"Gee!" exclaimed Mr. Redney Burke to himself as he scratched his short red hair. "Gee, I wish I had it!"

And the unfortunate part of it all was that he didn't have a cent. He searched every pocket and cranny of his superannuated clothes, from his feet, which rested on the ground, to his hat, which occupied an exalted position some three feet odd above the ground, for that which he knew he did not possess. The expected happened, for he found nothing.

"Gee!" he exclaimed again. "If I had another suit, I'd hock this. I gotta have that pipe; that's what!"

Strolling along the street, at peace with all the world, came a philanthropist. Redney's critical eye, casting about for ways and means, noted him as he came.

"I ought he was a stiff," he remarked confidentially to some friends a day or two later, "but I was away off, I was."

The philanthropist, whose good nature, to give the devil his due, was caused by a remarkably good dinner which he had just enjoyed—the philanthropist bore down upon Mr. Redney Burke. The latter saw him coming.

"Now, what's his game, anyways?" thought Mr. Burke as he turned back once more to gaze upon the pipe.

"Hello, small sir!" remarked the friend of mankind genially. "Merry Christmas!"

"Aw," thought the small sir to himself, "what ye givin' us? Why can't ye leave me alone?"

But he didn't say it. He simply looked up at the big man with a half coy, half frightened glance, more particularly to determine whether he might not be the police department in disguise.

"Merry Christmas!" he returned, a bit wistfully as he thought he saw a possible opening of a pleasant nature.

"Well, my boy," continued the man, "what are you going to have for Christmas, anyway?"

"Christmas!" returned Redney, with a slight variation from the truth. "We don't never have nothin' for Christmas, we don't."

The man smiled a smile of pity. "Dear me," he remarked, half to himself, "how true it is that one half of the world knows not how the other half lives." Then he raised his voice.

"What would you say, small sir, if I should buy you some of those toys?" He stopped as he gazed into the window. "Why, why," he went on, "I thought this was a toy store that you were looking into?"

"Now," returned Redney, "it's a tobacco store."

"But—but," continued the man, "you don't smoke tobacco. You certainly at your age cannot!"

"Now," returned Burke, "I don't. I

—I wasn't thinkin' about myself so much. I was thinkin' about me old father. He broke his pipe last month, an' he ain't had none since, an' he's too poor to git another one. I was lookin' at these. Gee! If I could git enough of the stuff together, I wouldn't do a thing but buy that there one for him—me poor ole father."

This was said with an air of the greatest frankness, although Mr. Redney Burke had always considered his father, as did many others, in the light of a genteel myth. Still he thought to himself that if he had a father and if he himself were worth a few millions, so he might—he didn't commit himself upon the subject, however, even in his thoughts—he might blow his father to a pipe some time. This consistent sentiment, he reasoned, justified his reply to the philanthropist.

"Well, well," remarked the latter, glancing down at the disinterested specimen before him, "but what would you like to have now for Christmas?"

Redney shook his head. "I ain't particular about meself. If I could have that there pipe—an'," he added as he scanned the possibilities heretofore unsuspected, "an' a good bit of smokin' tobacco, an' one of them there rubber things to put it in—say, if I could do that for the man—say! An' wouldn't he feel stuck on hisself! But, gee, wot's de use? I can't do it, so I might as well be goin'."

He made this last remark because he knew intuitively that brevity, which is the soul of wit, is also the essential of charitable enterprises. Good impulses don't last forever, so he moved on, shaking his head as he went.

The big man looked up and down the street to see if he was observed. Then he stretched forth his hand and caught Redney by the arm.

"Here, my boy," he exclaimed genially as he shoved a five dollar bill into Redney Burke's reluctant grasp—"go and get the pipe for your father; then go and get something for yourself, and—have at least, happy Christmas that you can be back upon." His eyes glistened as he said it, and, to his credit be it, he did not regret the impulse or the donation for a full two hours thereafter.

"Thanks," said Mr. Burke, with an air of a scrape and a stiff sort of bow. "Thanks from me an' my old man!"

The next day there was a quarrel in an unfrequented corner of the play yard of the Fourteenth street school. This formation resembled more than anything else an Eskimo hut composed, instead of innumerable articles, of a very animated and impudent crowd of boys gathered around a common center. From the aperture at the top of this human Eskimo hut, and therefore heightening the scene, ascended a column of smoke, and ascended to the skies there came a voice from within.

"Gee, fellers!" said the voice, "but ain't this great?" It was the voice of Mr. Redney Burke, the votary of Lady Nicotine, the center of an adoring crowd. He smoked a pipe—the pipe of his heart—and he filled it from a rubber case.

"Just fits in me pants pocket," he observed. And as he said it he put a few dollar bills and exhibited them.

"An' I got four more plunks like that d'ye tink?" he said.

Later, in the class room, the teacher lifted her head high in the air and sniffed.

"Some boy," she remarked severely, "has been smoking. I want to know who it is."

She looked—not around the room—but directly at Mr. Redney Burke. He faintly reeked with tobacco, and he knew it. Under the circumstances, therefore, he side stepped with alacrity into the aisle and looked squarely into the teacher's eyes.

"Me old wome mother," he explained glibly—"me mother had a smokin' jag on yestiddy, an' I had to stay home an' fill her pipes, an' me clo'es is full of it. It ain't me; it's her. D'ye see?" Then he whipped out a small, new leather pocketbook with a brand new penny in it and handed it over. "An' a merry Christmas to you, Miss Burt-whistle!" he remarked.

One of the most famous Christmas trees in history was erected at Windsor castle in the early forties. It was not so very remarkable for its height, which was forty feet, but for the fact that in the aggregate its crop of presents amounted in value to \$45,000, or the value of the product of 9,000 acres of forest land.

A Treasure Tree.

Oh, the happy boy is flopping
Down the hill with his new sled,
While the humble tramp is chopping
Kindling wood out in the shed,
And the ruffled,
Muffled, stuffed
Chicklet pecks the frozen corn,
And the golden,
Molden, olden
Brandy's looked for ev'ry morn!

Wint'ry Wrinkles.

The fragile maid is skating
On the pond behind the mill;
The sparrow's masticating
Frozen crumbs upon the sill,
And the bawling,
Sprawling, crawling
Infant's wrapped in flannels hot,
While the zealous,
Ever healing
Goose grease stands beside the cot.

These wintry scenes I fancy
As I'm snuggled in my bed,
Concealed so that you can't see
E'en the baldness of my head,
And the dashing,
Clashing, smashing
Hallstones rhyme upon my nose,
While I coolly,
Honest, truly,
Dream that summer's here again.

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Xmas Near the North Pole

"I THINK Christmas, 1883, was my most memorable one," said General Groey, the arctic explorer. "With my command I was proceeding southward in the hope of obtaining help, and about the 20th of October we encamped ourselves in a little hut at Cape Sabine. Our supply of food was running very low, and we were on very short rations, every one being allowed just food enough in each twenty-four hours to sustain life. Under these depressing circumstances and amid the awful silence of the polar night the cheerfulness that we continued to maintain was remarkable. It would have been a splendid opportunity for Dickens' character, Mark Tapley, who was always seeking some specially depressing situation in life to show how jolly he could be under adverse circumstances. As the Christmas season approached we all looked forward to it with eager anticipation, not only as a festive day the association and memories of which would to some extent vary the wearisome monotony of our lives, but because we knew that the winter solstice would fall about Dec. 22 and that then the sun would return and the long, dreary night be at an end.

"Christmas day came at last, Christmas in the arctic regions! At 6 o'clock

we had our breakfast—thin soup made of peas, carrots, blubber and potatoes. Our Christmas dinner was served at 1 o'clock. Hearken to our menu, ye who will sit down to the coming Christmas to roast turkey stuffed with oysters; first course, a stew of seal meat, onions, blubber, potatoes and bread crumbs; second course, served one hour after first, a stew of raisins, blubber and milk; dessert, a cup of hot chocolate. The best and most Christ-maslike feature of this meal was that we were allowed a sufficient quantity of it to satisfy the pangs of hunger. Our enjoyment of the dessert, one cup of chocolate, we tried to prolong as much as possible. Over it we told each other Christmas stories. We exchanged reminiscences of bygone Christmases at home with the loved ones so far away. We discussed the probability of our ever reaching our own firesides again, and we entered into an agreement that if we got back to civilization before another Christmas we would pass the day together in memory of that awful Christmas we were then spending in the realm of the relentless ice king. Alas, many of those brave fellows never lived to see another Christmas!"—Buffalo Express.

Christmas Dinner Recipes.

Chestnut stuffing is the most delicious that can go with a Christmas turkey. Shell a quart of Italian or French chestnuts. Put in hot water and boil until the skins are softened; drain off the water and remove the skins. Press them, a few at a time, through a colander and season with butter, salt and pepper. Add chopped parsley, onion and bread crumbs and season with stock.

Giblet Sauce.—Boil the giblets until tender; chop them, but not too fine, and add a tablespoonful of flour to the pan in which the turkey was roasted. Brown the flour, stirring constantly, adding slowly a cupful of water in which the giblets were boiled; season with salt and pepper and add the chopped giblets.

A Country Named For Christmas.

South Africa was discovered by the Portuguese, who were searching for an ocean road to India. Bartholomew Diaz was the commander of the two little ships that formed the expedition in 1482. Eleven years later Da Gama took another Portuguese fleet south. He discovered Natal on Christmas day and thus named it in consequence.

Tale of a Christmas Survivor.

"But where is that beautiful tail you had day before yesterday?"

"The farmer said, 'Heads I win, tails you lose.' Well, I took to my heels and lost my tail, but he did not win my head."

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XMAS A DAY OF TERROR.

Hard Lines of the Players Who Entertain Theater Crowds.

In the vaudeville houses where continuous performances are given Christmas day strikes terror to the most time hardened dramatic soul.

The doors open anywhere between 9:30 and 10:30 a. m. and close at about midnight. The headliners play their customary two turns, but those lower in the dramatic scale play "on demand," generally about four times. If an act is particularly weak, it is used to "chase" out the audience—in plain English, to tire it into leaving the house and making room for the line waiting in the lobby.

The low salaried vaudeville actor, therefore, eschews any Christmas dinner and hies himself to the nearest quick lunch counter, there to feast on turkey sandwiches, execrable coffee and pie as heavy as his spirits. By the time he has done his last turn on the stage he is more ready for bed than for the festive board.

To the unsuccessful actor Christmas is likely to bring that blessing of the Rialto, a "turkey date."

Scattered within easy access of New York are numerous small cities, or, more properly speaking, towns, where good shows never come. Of these the catchpenny manager keeps a list, and on quick notice he scours Broadway for cheap, unengaged talent, from which he organizes his company, rehearses it hastily in some playhouse conveniently idle at the time, rushes some cheap printing upon the poor, unsuspecting town and lands there bright and early Christmas morning. The population, show hungry, welcomes the holiday diversion and packs the town hall, matinee and night.

The actors are thus assured of a good Christmas dinner and supper and a percentage of the box office receipts. Usually these are divided according to the importance of the roles played by the actors. This will tide them over until New Year's day, which brings another "turkey date."

Many an actor now featured on Broadway has played his share of "turkey dates." One in particular tells how, with five associates, he put on "The Clearing Case," not abashed that the cast called for no less than twelve capable actors, and was quite radiant over the returns of "one Christmas dinner with trimmings" and \$125 to be divided among the actors.—Washington Post.

CHRISTMAS "BARRING OUT."

A Strange Custom of Schools by an Teacher.

"Barring out" was one of the Christmas customs greatly in vogue in England three centuries ago. It is a custom that obtains not only in England, but to some extent in our own country, to this day, although it is not particularly a Christmas custom in our country. "Barring out" was the keeping of the teacher or master out of the schoolhouse until he yielded to such terms as the boys of his school chose to dictate. If the boys were able to keep the teacher out of the schoolhouse for three days and nights he was bound by all the laws of the custom to come to terms with the boys and to grant them all that they demanded in the way of half holidays and abbreviated lesson hours and extended recesses. If, on the other hand, the teacher outwitted the boys and regained possession of the schoolroom, the chagrined pupils were bound to submit to such terms as he chose to dictate. As these terms usually included the severe trouncing of all the boys having anything to do with the barring out of the teacher, the boys were on the alert to keep him from defeating them. More than one Christmas time of rejoicing has been turned into a time of weeping and wailing on the part of boys whose some barred out teacher has defeated.

A Laundry List For Christmas.

For a laundry list obtain a delicate book slab with two or three leaves and bound in cloth. From embroidery linen cut a piece sufficiently large to face the front and back and with a margin a quarter of an inch wide all around.

On each leaf of the piece mark the words "Laundry List" within a frame at the middle, and to decorate the remainder of the piece draw a conventional flower design.

When the work is finished, apply the linen to the slate and cover with glue by turning the edges over and making them fast to the inside on a narrow edge of the cloth binding that is usually left between the edge of the slate part and the binding.

At the top hinge corner attach a ring with bow and ribbons, by means of which it can be hung in a convenient place, and at the knot tie a piece of string half a yard long, to the end of which a pencil may be attached.

Christmas Wonder Oranges.

The wonder orange may be used to conceal small Christmas gifts and it also makes a pretty decoration for the tree. Take a good sized ball of coarse orange colored worsted and begin winding it about the present. If the gift is not especially small enough to admit this, first wrap in crushed tissue paper.

After the worsted is completely wound about to make a ball the size of a big orange fasten green tissue paper leaves in a cluster about where the stem should be and a loop of baby-orange ribbon with which to hang it up.

The wonder orange can also be used to stuff into the toe of some expectant Christmas stocking.

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Meals Lunches Short Orders

THE KANGAROO RESTAURANT

First class meals at all hours, day and night. Oysters in season. Pies, cakes, doughnuts always on hand.

F. D. Cohota, Prop.

The Elite Restaurant and Chop House

Meals at all hours.

Fruits, Candies, Cigars.

Good cooking and just as you want it.

MRS. C. L. WALKER, Propr.

HEALTH

"I don't think we could keep house without Theford's Black-Draught. We have used it in the family for over two years with the best of results. I have not had a doctor in the house for that length of time. It is a doctor in itself and always ready to make a person well and happy."—JAMES HALL, Jacksonville, Ill.

Because this great medicine relieves stomach pains, frees the constipated bowels and invigorates the torpid liver and weakened kidneys.

No Doctor

is necessary in the home where Theford's Black-Draught is kept. Families living in the country, miles from any physician, have been kept in health for years with this medicine as their only doctor. Theford's Black-Draught cures biliousness, dyspepsia, colds, chills and fever, bad blood, headaches, diarrhoea, constipation, colic and almost every other ailment because the stomach, bowels, liver and kidneys so nearly control the health.

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